

ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek rule which is cutting paychecks to the middle class. In other words, this is an amendment that seeks to take the causes of joblessness head on rather than simply treating the symptoms of a down economy. It is an amendment that aims to help Americans find jobs with a steady paycheck and the promise of a better life.

There are other amendments not contained within this package the Senate should be voting on too. For instance, the national right-to-work amendment Senator PAUL and I have just introduced—transformational legislation that would empower American workers and put our country on a path to greater prosperity.

But the larger point is this: The Senate needs to be allowed to function again. While Members file amendments on behalf of their constituents, those amendments should get due consideration. That is particularly true when those amendments have bipartisan support and aim to address our still-ailing economy and the families struggling in it. My hope is our Democratic colleagues will allow this to happen.

These are serious times and we cannot afford to waste months on purely partisan proposals that have no hope of passing. We need to work together to advance serious proposals that expand jobs and opportunity.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MATTHEW S. SLUSS-TILLER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a Kentucky Special Operations Forces soldier who was lost in service to his country, the life of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller of Catlettsburg, KY, which prematurely ended on February 3, 2010, in Pakistan, where he was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was killed when the enemy attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was 35 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller received many awards, medals, and decorations, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, two Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Army Achievement Medals, five Army Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Star, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, three noncommissioned officers professional development ribbons, the Army service ribbon, two overseas service ribbons, the NATO Medal, the combat action badge, and the senior parachutist badge; obviously a much decorated soldier.

Pictured behind me is Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller with his daughter Hannah, who was only 3 years old when he died. Matthew's wife Melissa proudly sent this picture to my office so it can be honored on the Senate floor. It was taken the summer before Matthew was killed, and it was his last picture with his daughter.

Melissa remembers the bond between Matthew and Hannah fondly. "He used to sing to me and Hannah," she says.

He would dance with her standing on his feet, singing loudly. Thinking of it makes me smile. He loved being a husband and a father, and he was great at both.

Born and raised in eastern Kentucky, Matthew graduated from Lawrence County High School in 1993. Brenda Thornbury, his former art teacher, remained friends with Matthew after he graduated and recalls he knew from a young age what he wanted to do. "Matthew was a wonderful person," she says.

He was always eager to do whatever he needed to do to serve his country . . . he knew he would serve his country. He loved the Lord, and he loved his family.

Matthew's father Edward Tiller agrees. "From the time I bought him his first GI Joe, he wanted to be an Army man," he said.

In short, it seems clear that for Matthew, the Army was not just a job, it was a way of life. He was dedicated to justice and service in the name of our country.

In 1991, Matthew enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves as a heavy construction mechanic and served at the 261st Ordnance Company located at Cross Lanes, WV. In 1993, he left the family farm and enlisted in the Active-Duty Army as a signal specialist. He served at Fort Bragg, NC, as well as in Germany and in Kuwait.

SFC Jamie Mullinax, a friend of Matthew's who trained with him at Fort Bragg, knew well the look of happiness we can see in Matthew's face behind me. He says:

If you knew Matt, you knew that smile. He always strived to do the best at what he did. I know he believed in what he was doing and loved wearing the military uniform and believed in what it stood for.

As the list of awards, medals, and decorations I read earlier makes clear, Matthew excelled at being a soldier. In his many years of training, he successfully completed the U.S. Army Airborne course, the Jumpmaster course, the Master Jumpmaster course, the Air Movement Operations course, the Military Transition Team course, the Civil Affairs Qualification course, and the Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officer's courses.

Prior to his time of deployment, Matthew deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo. In his final deployment Matthew was assigned to the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, based out of Fort Bragg.

In his free time Matthew loved golf, hunting, hiking, camping, and riding

motorcycles, and he was a passionate fan of UK basketball.

The many people who came to pay their respects at Matthew's funeral in eastern Kentucky witnessed the recognition of Matthew's sacrifice when they saw a three-star general come to their small town to lead the honor guard.

LTG John Mulholland delivered these remarks at the service:

Matthew was part of America's Army Special Operations Forces and as such was one of the finest soldiers in the world.

He went on:

That's no exaggeration, that he was embarked on a very important if not critical mission that is directly tied to the security of this country.

Of course, as impressive as his service record was, I think the picture behind me makes clear that the most important job to Matthew was husband and father. I know his family misses him terribly.

Melissa says the following about her husband:

I believe that our souls are beacons glowing immensely with light so powerful and beautiful that only in heaven can we become a true vision of ourselves. I know my Matthew is standing tall in heaven, his light so stunning a reflection of who he was. God needed him, and I cannot question that.

We are thinking of Matthew's loved ones today, including his wife Melissa, his daughter Hannah, his parents Edward Tiller and Jane Blankenship, his stepparents Von Tiller and Forest Blankenship, his siblings Selena Dawn Pack Blankenship, Michael Blankenship, and Annette Sorg, and many other beloved family members and friends.

Our country has lost a faithful and devoted hero with the passing of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller. I know my colleagues join me in expressing great condolences to his family for their loss, and great gratitude to them for lending our country such an honorable and noble patriot.

I hope Hannah and all of Matthew's loved ones know that America will always—always—be grateful for his sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.